

SIXTH ANNUAL

REPORT

OF THE

Suffolk

LUNATIC ASYLUM.

DECEMBER 1843.

Woodbridge:

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1844.

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R E P O R T.

THOUGH the past year has not been free from its anxieties, attendant on numerous admissions in an over crowded house—and many of these from very old age, and general infirmity, of a peculiarly painful and discouraging character—it is a matter of no small thankfulness, to be able to state, the continuance of its healthy condition, and the general quietude and comfort of its inmates.

The number of patients in the house this day is 212, precisely the same (notwithstanding all the recent discharges and removals) as at the close of last year, the only variation being 4 males more, and 4 females less; and the increase being among County paupers. There have been 66 fresh admissions in the year: 32 males, 34 females.—26 have been discharged, cured; 11 sent away for want of room, or removed by their friends; and 29 have died.

Old age is a very marked feature of our more recent admissions—6 nearly 70 years of age, and 5 above. These, with our long list of incurables; and idiots, “those living sepulchres of a buried intellect,” do not allow of the indulgence of a favourable prognosis.

When at the commencement of the year, it was thought desirable to urge the removal of that class of patients, denominated boarders, whose residence interfered with the more immediate objects of the institution—Suffolk County paupers,—the most active means were put in exercise for the accomplishment of this end, and many of these patients have been consequently taken away. An account will be added in the pages of general expenditure of the numbers thus removed, and the loss thus sustained. While the friends of these individuals have seen the necessity for the measure, and the feeling of justice which prompted its adoption, in every case of such removal, there has been great reluctance and sorrow expressed; and several are now looking anxiously to our anticipated enlargement, under the hope, that there may be subsequently found accommodation for their still afflicted relatives (if their lives are spared) to be re-admitted amongst us. While these continued assurances are satisfactory and gratifying,

they shew, also, how painful the necessity has been, and *is*, of closing the doors against them, and how urgent the call to receive them again, when we can.

An extremely interesting example exists in one of our late removals. A female was taken from this house on the 4th. of October last, to a distance; who though she is now under the kindest and most skilful guardianship, both professional and domestic, she writes to us, as she says, “in tears,” at the loss of those indulgencies which her undeviating correct conduct had obtained for her here.*

The peculiarly delicate ties of twelve years’ daily association between the Professional Attendant, and the objects of his solicitude, in an attached household, as this is, in “unity with itself,” *is* not, and cannot be dissevered, without feelings of regret upon the part of those who remain: and pangs of distress (as was apparent in this case) upon those who remove. This patient cannot be expected to return, concurring circumstances forbid it: but there are others who have left us, very similarly affected in desire, (incurable patients, but comparatively happy

* M. B. A Government female patient, removed to the Surrey Lunatic Asylum.

inmates,) and these certainly have a prior claim, from previous residence, and the pecuniary advantages that *have* been derived from them, to those who are now making weekly, and sometimes even daily, applications.

It does not appear very likely, however, even with the proposed additional accommodation, that we shall have any room to spare. The increase of County paupers, which DEMANDED this additional room, still goes on, and the whole matter in connection with late removals, and present requirements, cannot be looked at without the mingled feelings of thankfulness and sorrow—thankfulness for the efforts in exercise, and sorrow on account of their necessity. The *effectiveness* of the remedy by no means removes the regret at the existence of the *disease*; and while every opportunity would be sought, and every effort employed for the perfection of the remedy, the more important engagement still must be, the *prevention* of the disease.

Our number of criminal lunatics is now reduced to *three*, and these are of the County. One is a very insane man; the other two are objects of enquiry upon that nice distinction which has been drawn between destitution of principle, and perversion of feeling, where,

"in the latter, the patient cannot *hear* the voice of conscience, while in the former, he has no conscience to hear."

It is well to know (though it can hardly be called satisfactory knowledge) that in this increase, alluded to before, we are by no means solitary sufferers: it appears to be almost universally felt; and the general complaint of almost all our best regulated institutions is, that they are too small for the numbers requiring admission. There are various causes which have been assigned for this; one may be, that that which was formerly secret, is now much more made known and seen abroad. If, as residents, of an Agricultural County, we are free from others which are more prominent in manufacturing districts, we see occasionally, in the shattered constitutions of some of our inmates, the EFFECT of want, and the dread of want. This is apparent in some of our re-admissions also, particularly where any hereditary tendency exists; whatever induced the exhibition of the disturbance at first, is the most likely thing on earth to cause a relapse.

The condition of patients on admission is at this time engaging the attention of the Legislature, whether it is not frequently such as to impede

their recovery. Perhaps, it may be considered a matter of feeling, though hardly of feeling only, and consequently requiring notice, their being brought sometimes in an open cart by police-men, giving an *apparent* criminality to afflictive distress.

We are very free here from the unlicensed exercise of those debasing passions which are justly charged with the developement of mania. Intemperance does not appear to be the cause with us, beyond the proportion of 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ cent. and by taking the calculation either on our late annual admissions, or upon a general estimate of fourteen years, there is not much beyond a fractional variation. A very far higher $\frac{1}{2}$ centage is given, according to late legislative investigations, and returns from manufacturing places; so that, while as agricultural residents, we claim exemption from both the excitements of intellectualism, and the distractions of a city, we stand in this respect on the higher vantage ground, of a more outward morality. It may be questioned, according to a very high and valuable authority,* whether inebriety is as frequent a cause of insanity as is generally supposed; whether it is not as often a SYMPTOM as a cause, “degrading the intellects before it *perverts* them.”

* Dr. Millingen.

The milder system of treatment than was formerly adopted, has been advanced as one cause for the pressure of patients *within* the Asylum. Patients are said to live longer than they did, and instead of a $\frac{1}{2}$ centage of deaths of 20, it varies now, between 7 and 10. This is, however, mere general report, and it does not tally with our somewhat lengthened experience. Our $\frac{1}{2}$ centage of deaths varies very little, though the system of non-coercion has been always in operation with us; and though vigilant oversight has always been found (as it almost always will) to supersede the NECESSITY of mechanical restraint. This view, also, does not recognize those concomitant diseases with cerebral disturbance under which our patients sink. All do not die of idiopathic insanity, but frequently from sympathetic mania, with other organic mischief.

Of all grounds of estimating the efficiency of an institution, this one of deaths is amongst the most questionable of existing criteria. We have had within the past year several patients brought in almost in a state of dissolution. Two, have been inmates of only twelve days; one, of only eight days; one, who never rallied from an epileptic seizure, which took place on the road hither; and one, an inmate of an hour.

Deducting these cases, thus perhaps unavoidably imposed, but still apparently swelling numbers, our mortality scarcely varies at all.

We are now looking forward with no small anxiety to the proposed additional buildings. The plan of Messrs. SCOTT & MOFFATT, of Spring Gardens, as far as one can judge upon paper, seems to promise much of what we are in actual want. If an anticipative caution were allowable, it would be best convenience should be sacrificed to show. Not possessing a decorative building, one may be allowed the question, whether for a pauper Asylum it may not have a blush of inconsistency upon it. With our present frontage, we never could really attain to anything *fine*; but our ambition must be limited by the wish, to have a house whose inside is better than its outside; while one would be sorry either for the dwelling or its inmates to appear better than they are.

The plan provides very carefully for general inspection: the keepers and nurses over their patients—and so far well: but inspection will never supersede association. The attendant's room may overlook much, but if he remains in it, he will not be in fulfilment of the most important part of his duty. His service is constantly

preventive service : and in regard to the objects of his care, the smile and the tear should be in a measure common to them both ; for it is only by *actual association*, with the patients in their actions and pursuits, that so calm an ascendancy is gained over them as promotes their comfort, and occasionally establishes their cure.

This constant association is not always free from hazard, more especially where the non-coercive system is carried out. This is evident enough on the female side of the house, where a well-known character, the Heroine of Waterloo, fully establishes her claim to the funded pension she draws from, if continued feats of arms form the grounds of the grant.* Notice is taken in the House Committee minutes, of the 20th. of April, of a patient breaking sixty-seven panes of glass, on a sudden seizure. Another, about a month back, the like destructive work upon fifty; and those two most extraordinary characters, who take the titles, and occasionally something *more* than the titles, of King and Queen, have both, within the last week only, been extremely violent. The Queen, as she was working (which notwithstanding her variable sway, she constantly does, in the laundry, and generally speaking,

* This extraordinary woman actually fought in the field of Waterloo, and now draws a pension from the Waterloo fund.

well, too) broke two tables, and several drying horses: and the King, on seeing the gardener remove some trees from the spot where the enlargement is to be, declared not only, his refusal to pay for any *new* buildings, but signified his determination, somewhat inconveniently, of knocking down the *old*.

It is not intended to say that such occasional outbreaks justify mechanical restraint; but honestly, to confess their occasional existence, and to bear at the same time as honest testimony to the ceaseless kindness of the keepers and nurses, whose quiet forbearance and extreme caution, on such occurrences, is increasingly valued, as their servitude is prolonged.

It is hoped that the new arrangements will allow of our taking still more ground into cultivation by the patients. Employment is a subject engaging much public attention: and one cannot be too urgent now in the selection of PROPER pursuits, and the avoidance of engagements of a morbid character. Independently of a QUESTIONABLE EFFECT, a pursuit itself may not be unobjectionable, on the score of moral agency *alone*; and one would not sanction in one's patients, what one would not engage in one's-self. Manufacturing business *might*,

to a greater extent, be carried on; such as book-binding, shoe-making, tailors' work, rope-making, and twine-spinning: but the advantages of agriculture and horticulture, are beyond all. The filling up a very dangerous pit at the bottom of the field in front, occupied and kept in contented employment, *twenty men, for more than a month*; gravel was barrowed up by them sufficient to cover three of our airing courts, and this again, afforded them additional employ. One of our most dangerous men, formerly both to himself and others, never being, as he expressed it, right for a week together *within* the galleries, now works, and has worked, for many months, usefully and quietly, in our blacksmiths' shop, without offering the slightest molestation to any one.

In walking over our galleries, and finding several idle, who might be advantageously employed, one is almost inclined to echo the desire expressed by a witness who was examined some years since, before the House of Commons, and being asked what quantity of ground he wished for his patients, took full latitude of reply, and said, "just an acre a man." This extensive request was not altogether an outrageous one. We have a patient with us now, who has this season, twice dug over, single handed, an acre and half of accurately measured ground. And

what makes this case the more profitably instructive is, that this insane labourer has been twice returned to us as an unmanageable man.

Facts, however, are too notorious to need any additional record of the possibility of making our Asylums, amongst the higher classes, literary, and amongst the lower, mechanics' institutions; but we would desire to have them something even beyond this. Moral improvement is always calculated to bring about intellectual; and seeing how close the connection is, between corporeal and mental, the mind acting on the body and the body on the mind, we would try to *prove*, that it is little less so between *mental* and *moral*. We would bring before them *truth*, which, seen as truth, is the certain corrective of error: and shew, that our houses in one sense contain *rationals* who have come amongst *irrationals*, to be taught from others who have learnt, that true *wisdom* is to be found in the retreat of the insane; happiness in the abode even of distresses and distractions; and *immortal* possession in the loss of all things.

JOHN KIRKMAN, M.D.

SUFFOLK LUNATIC ASYLUM,
December 22, 1843.

APPENDIX.

PATIENTS ADMITTED, DISCHARGED, AND DEAD,

From 1st. January to 31st. December, 1843.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Patients in the House, 31st. 1842.....	98	114	212
Admitted since	33	34	67
	131	148	279
Discharged—Cured	9	17	26
Discharged—not Cured	6	5	11
Died	13	16	29
	28	38	66
Remaining in the Asylum, 31st. December, 1843.....	103	110	213

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF ADMISSIONS, DISCHARGES, AND DEATHS,

In the whole Fifteen Years, since the Asylum opened.

Years.	MALES.			FEMALES.			TOTAL.			In the House at the end of each year.			Total.
	Discharged.		Admitted.	Discharged.		Admitted.	Discharged.		Admitted.	Discharged.		Admitted.	
	Cured.	Not cured.	Total.	Died.	Not cured.	Total.	Cured.	Not cured.	Total.	Died.	Escaped.	Admitted.	
1829	72	11	11	11	2	11	4	142	20	22	15	50	105
1830	48	12	9	21	3	15	7	82	24	36	18	66	67
1831	42	8	4	12	3	22	10	87	27	34	26	80	80
1832	42	21	4	25	2	22	8	67	41	6	47	25	75
1833	34	18	4	22	1	14	5	19	8	32	9	41	22
1834	32	16	7	23	9	18	5	23	8	64	34	46	17
1835	39	18	9	27	8	40	15	8	23	6	79	33	17
1836	30	11	13	24	7	26	11	16	27	9	56	29	51
1837	30	13	5	18	11	18	13	1	18	16	76	30	36
1838	35	16	2	18	1	31	21	2	23	7	66	37	41
1839	29	15	5	20	10	1	53	27	9	36	6	82	42
1840	31	14	1	15	7	38	23	3	26	13	69	37	4
1841	35	16	2	18	13	29	16	1	17	9	64	32	3
1842	27	10	2	12	10	34	14	2	16	11	61	24	4
1843	33	9	6	15	13	34	17	5	22	16	67	26	11
Total.	559	208	73	281	170	5	568	243	67	320	138	1127	461

169.

Average number of Patients throughout the Fifteen Years—169.
By this Table it appears that the increase of Patients has not been attended with increased mortality.

ADMITTED—IN THE YEAR 1843.

Cases not exceeding three months' duration and first attack.	Cases not exceeding twelve months' duration and first attack.	Cases not exceeding two years' duration and first attack.	Cases of more than two years' duration.	Cases of those who have had previous attacks.
20	9	8	22	12

DISCHARGED—IN THE YEAR 1843.

Cases cured, not having been Insane more than twelve months before admission, and discharged within six months.	Cases cured, having been Insane two years and upwards, before admission.	Cases cured, having had previous attacks.	Cases not cured, discharged by desire of Friends, and by order of the Magistrates, as improper objects.
8	3	4	10

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AGES OF PATIENTS ON ADMISSION IN 1843.

From Ten to Twenty.		Twenty to Thirty.		Thirty to Forty.		Forty to Fifty.		Fifty to Sixty.		Sixty to Seventy.		Seventy and upwards.		TOTALS.	
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1	1	7	8	12	7	5	5	3	7	2	5	3	1	33	34

AGES OF PATIENTS DIED IN 1843.

From Ten to Twenty.		Twenty to Thirty.		Thirty to Forty.		Forty to Fifty.		Fifty to Sixty.		Sixty to Seventy.		Seventy and upwards.		TOTALS.	
M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
		1	1	2	4	5	5	2	1	3	3	2	13	16	29

SUFFOLK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

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TABLE SHEWING THE NUMBER OF MONTHLY ADMISSIONS,

Through the Fifteen Years since the Asylum opened, with a Total of each Twelve Months, ending 31st. December, 1843.

DEGREE OF EDUCATION TABLE OF THE 213 PATIENTS NOW
IN THE HOUSE.

	Males.	Females	Total.
Well Educated	7	13	20
Can Read and Write	31	36	67
Can Read only	12	23	35
Can neither Read nor Write	43	26	69
Not ascertained	10	12	22
Total	103	110	213

TABLE OF MARRIED AND SINGLE.

	Males,	Females	Total.
Married	48	64	112
Single	55	46	101
Total	103	110	213

DIET TABLE OF THE SUFFOLK LUNATIC ASYLUM,

December 31, 1842.

SUFFOLK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

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DAY.	BREAKFAST.	DINNER.	SUPPER.
SUNDAY.	Milk Gruel and 6ozs. of Bread each, Oatmeal 12lbs. & 6galls. of Milk for about 200 Patients.	Males, 8ozs. Bread, 1½oz. Cheese, and ¾-pint Beer. Females, same, except 1oz. less Bread.	Males, ½lb. Bread, ¾oz. Butter, and ½-pint Tea. Females, same except 1oz. less Bread.
MONDAY.	Ditto.	Males, 6ozs. Meat, 4ozs. Bread, ¾-pint Beer, and Vegetables. Females same, with 1oz. less Meat.	Males, ½lb. Bread, 1½oz. Cheese, and ¾-pint Beer, Females, same with 1oz. less Bread.
TUESDAY.	Ditto.	Soup from Monday, with additional Meat, and 6oz. Bread each.	Same as Sunday.
WEDNESDAY.	Ditto.	Males, Suet Dumpling of 1lb. and Females, one of ¾lb. with ¾-pint Beer each.	Same as Monday.
THURSDAY.	Ditto.	Same as Monday.	Same as Wednesday.
FRIDAY.	Ditto.	Same as Tuesday.	Same as Tuesday.
SATURDAY.	Ditto.	Same as Wednesday.	Same as Thursday.

In reference to this Dietary, it may be well to remark, generally, that this Asylum is conducted very much on the principle of a large domestic family, and several Patients, especially when sick, are supplied from the Superintendent's table.

HEADS OF EXPENDITURE,

For the Year ending 31st. December, 1843.

	£.	s.	d.
Meat, lbs,	33,798	644	5 11
Bread, loaves $4\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. each	22,597	509	7 3
Flour, stones	1,030	93	14 6
Milk, gallons	2,916	75	15 1
Butter, lbs.	2,780	118	16 11
Eggs		22	7
Oatmeal, lbs.	4,377	36	1
Tea, lbs.	403	89	7 5
Cheese, lbs.	5,743	135	5 5
Soap, lbs.	4,768	89	13 9
Grocery		182	4 6
Candles, lbs.	1,077	25	12 11
Coals, tons.	219	201	16
Wood, loads	17	17	
Medicines, Wine, and Spirits		38	4 7
Beer		224	19 6
Clothing		447	
Sundries		48	11 10
Salaries and Wages		693	8 6
Total....	£.	3,693	12 1

THERE HAVE BEEN REMOVED WITHIN THE YEAR—

	£.	s.	d.
2 1st. Class Patients, at a loss of	23	9	0
1 2nd. Class	6	5	6
3 3rd. Class	6	5	6
4 Out-County Patients	12	0	0
	£.	48	0 0

Leaving, now, only 4 Out County Patients in the House and 7 Boarders.—The remainder are all County Paupers.

SUFFOLK LUNATIC ASYLUM.

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TABLE SHEWING THE WEEKLY AND ANNUAL CHARGE FOR EACH PATIENT, SINCE THE ASYLUM OPENED.

YEARS.	1st. Quarter.			2nd. Quarter.			3rd. Quarter.			4th. Quarter.			Annual Charges.		
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
1829	12	2	8	2	7	0	7	0	8	2	22	19	10		
1830	7	7	6	5	5	3	7	0	17	1	17	16	5		
1831	7	0	7	7	5	10	7	0	17	1	15	10	11		
1832	6	5	5	10	5	10	5	10	10	5	14	15	9		
1833	5	10	5	10	5	3	5	10	5	10	14	15	9		
1834	5	10	5	3	5	10	5	10	5	10	14	15	9		
1835	7	0	5	3	4	8	5	10	5	10	14	15	9		
1836	5	10	5	3	5	10	5	10	5	10	14	15	9		
1837	7	0	5	10	5	10	5	10	5	10	15	18	6		
1838	6	5	5	10	5	10	6	5	6	5	15	18	6		
1839	7	0	6	7	0	6	5	10	6	5	16	13	8		
1840	7	0	6	5	6	5	6	5	7	0	17	8	10		
1841	7	0	6	5	6	5	6	5	7	0	17	8	10		
1842	7	0	6	5	5	10	6	5	5	10	16	13	8		
1843					6				6		15	18	6		

FINIS.

